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Inventory
for

Manuscript Collection
MS-476

Collector of Customs, Waldoboro District
Correspondence

Inclusive dates 1867-1871

by
Nathan R. Lipfert

December 2017

One Folder
Accession # 2006.087.01

A PART OF THE CAPTAIN W. J. LEWIS PARKER BEQUEST

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Abstract

Collector of Customs, Waldoboro District

Correspondence, 1867-1871

One folder

United States Custom House officer, District of Waldoboro, ME.

Six letters received by Waldoboro Collector of Customs James A. Hall from Treasury Department officials, and one copy of a letter sent by Hall to the Secretary of the Treasury.

Bequeathed by Capt. W. J. Lewis Parker in 2006.

MS-476; Accession # 2006.087.01

Finding aid in repository; folder level control.

Added entries—people

Coleman, W. H.

Delmar, Alex.

Hall, James A.

Haven, F., Jr.

McCulloch, Hugh

Sargent, N.

Walker, Francis A.

Young, Edward

Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels)

Bureau of Statistics, United States Treasury Department

Caledonia (British brig)

Custom House, Waldoboro ME.

Office of Commissioner of Customs, United States Treasury Department

Office of the U.S. Assistant Treasurer

Added entries—places

Waldoboro (ME)

Added entries—key terms

Custom houses

Customs administration—Officials and employees

Shipwrecks

Wreck

Acquisition

These documents from the Waldoboro Custom House were bequeathed to Maine Maritime Museum from the estate of Capt. W. J. Lewis Parker in November and December 2006.

Provenance

Capt. Parker was an extremely knowledgeable collector and an expert on North American schooners. He picked up many parts of his collection of maritime papers by purchase from dealers, auctions, or estate sales, and by gifts from relatives of maritime figures. It is not known where he obtained the Waldoboro Collector of Customs papers. These papers were found in Captain Parker's study with other similar items, and were part of his maritime library which he bequeathed to Maine Maritime Museum.

Restrictions

There are no restrictions on the use of these materials for study or research. Researchers should seek permission to obtain copies, and for publication of any sort.

Physical Condition

These letters have the usual minor tears and dirt of 19th-century documents. Overall, the Waldoboro Collector of Customs letters are in very good condition.

Biographical/Historical Notes

The Custom District of Waldoboro was created by law in 1799, and continued active until 1913, when the office transferred to Rockland. It was one of the largest districts in Maine, encompassing all the coastal towns from Bristol to Thomaston (which then included Rockland), all of them shipbuilding, fishing, and shipping towns. A new combined custom house and post office was built in Waldoboro in 1857, replacing an earlier wooden one destroyed by fire. This 1857 building still exists, although the custom service left in 1913 and the post office soon after. It was the public library for many years. It was this building that James A. Hall worked in, as Collector of Customs for Waldoboro. He had Deputy Collectors in some of the other port towns in the district, to help with the work load.

James A. Hall was born 10 August 1835 on the farm of his father James in Jefferson, ME. In the 1860 census he was living in Damariscotta, ME with his wife Roxanna, 20, and their one-year-old daughter Suncy/Lunie, and his occupation was given as Trader. He joined the Army in 1861, rose quickly through the ranks, and was a brigadier general by the Civil War's end in 1865. He must have received the Collector of Customs position soon after, for he had the position by 9 May 1867 when the first of these letters was written. He held

the position until sometime in 1882. He died 10 June 1893, at the age of 57. He is buried in the Hillside-Norris Cemetery in Damariscotta.

Scope and Content Notes

All of the incoming letters are about statements, returns, reports, etc., which Collector Hall was responsible for making to various offices of the Treasury, or about the transfer of funds. The one item of special interest is the copy of the letter Collector Hall sent to the Secretary of the Treasury in 1867, relating to the wreck of the British North American brig *Caledonia*. The brig, of Hillsboro, New Brunswick, "was wrecked on this coast April 15th 1867, condemned by 'board of survey' and sold at public auction for benefit of all concerned." Since this was a foreign vessel and parts of it had been sold to U.S. citizens, Mr. Hall was inquiring whether he should be collecting custom duties on those parts. He had had the material appraised and was prepared to collect duties on the appraised value, rather than the auction value. We wish the reply was included in this collection.